

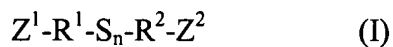
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-12. Previously Canceled

13. (Previously Amended) A rubber composition vulcanizable with sulfur which comprises

- a) at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of diene polymers, olefin/monomeric diene copolymers and halogenated isoolefin/para-alkylstyrene copolymers;
- b) silica or mixture of silicas as filler;
- c) at least one agent promoting linking between the silica and the polymer, said

agent having the formula

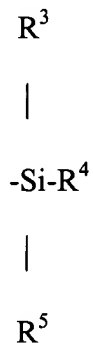


wherein

n is an integer between 2 and 8,

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, are each selected from among substituted or unsubstituted alkylene groups having 1 to 18 carbon atoms and of substituted or unsubstituted arylene groups having 6 to 12 carbon atoms,

Z<sup>1</sup> and Z<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, each represents a group



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wherein  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ , which may be the same or different, are each selected from among alkyl groups having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, phenyl groups, alkoxy groups having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, and cycloalkoxy groups having 5 to 8 carbon atoms, with the proviso that at least one of  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  is an alkoxy or cycloalkoxy; and

d) at least one guanidine substituted by at least two groups, which may be the same or different, and each selected from among alkyl, aryl or aralkyl groups;

CS wherein the composition satisfies at least one of the following features (i) and/or (ii):

- (i) the composition comprises at least one diene polymer which has at least one amino terminal group of an aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine which is bonded thereto at the end of the chain, the polymer then being devoid of alkoxy silane and silanol group; and
- (ii) the composition comprises at least one free aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine.

14. Previously Canceled.

15. (Previously Amended) Composition according to Claim 13 wherein the filler comprises at least 40% by weight of silica.

16. (Original) Composition according to Claim 13 wherein in the linking agent of formula (I),  $n$  is greater than 2, or if there are several such agents, at least 80% of  $n$  is greater than 2 for the total of these agents.

17. (Original) Composition according to Claim 13 wherein the agent of formula (I) or mixture of such agents comprises at least 4% by weight calculated on the weight of silica or mixture comprising silica used as filler.

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18. (Original) Composition according to Claim 13 wherein the guanidine or mixture of guanidines comprises 0.5 to 4% by weight calculated on the weight of silica or mixture of silicas as filler.

19. (Original) Composition according to Claim 18 wherein the guanidine or mixture of guanidines comprises 1 to 3% by weight of the filler.

20. (Original) Composition according to Claim 13, wherein the free aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine, or mixture of free aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amines, comprises 0.5 to 4% by weight calculated on the weight of silica or mixtures of silicas as filler.

CS 21. (Original) Composition according to Claim 20 wherein the aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine comprises 1 to 3% by weight of filler.

22. (Original) Composition according to Claim 13, comprising at least one free aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine homogeneously dispersed in the composition.

23. (Previously Amended) A method of preparing a composition according to Claim 22 comprising in order preparing the polymer in solution, stopping the polymerization, adding the aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine to the solution, and stripping the solvent.

24. (Original) Tire tread comprising at least one composition according to Claim 13.

25. (Original) Tread obtained by vulcanization of the tread according to Claim 24.

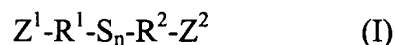
26. (Original) Tire casing comprising at least one composition according to Claim 13.

27. (Original) Tire casing obtained by vulcanizing the tire casing according to Claim 26.

28. (New) A rubber composition vulcanizable with sulfur which comprises

a) at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of diene polymers, olefin/monomeric diene copolymers and halogenated isoolefin/para-alkylstyrene copolymers;

- b) silica or mixture of silicas as filler;
- c) at least one agent promoting linking between the silica and the polymer, said agent having the formula



wherein

n is an integer between 2 and 8,

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, are each selected from among substituted or unsubstituted alkylene groups having 1 to 18 carbon atoms and of substituted or unsubstituted arylene groups having 6 to 12 carbon atoms,

Z<sup>1</sup> and Z<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, each represents a group

R<sup>3</sup>

|

-Si-R<sup>4</sup>

|

R<sup>5</sup>

wherein R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup>, which may be the same or different, are each selected from among alkyl groups having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, phenyl groups, alkoxy groups having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, and cycloalkoxy groups having 5 to 8 carbon atoms, with the proviso that at least one of R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup> and R<sup>5</sup> is an alkoxy or cycloalkoxy; and

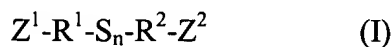
- d) at least one guanidine substituted by at least two groups, which may be the same

or different, and each selected from among alkyl, aryl or aralkyl groups;

wherein the composition comprises at least one diene polymer which has at least one amino terminal group of an aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine which is bonded thereto at the end of the chain, the polymer then being devoid of alkoxy silane and silanol group.

29. (New) A rubber composition vulcanizable with sulfur which comprises

- CS
- a) at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of diene polymers, olefin/monomeric diene copolymers and halogenated isoolefin/para-alkylstyrene copolymers;
  - b) silica or mixture of silicas as filler;
  - c) at least one agent promoting linking between the silica and the polymer, said agent having the formula

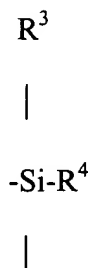


wherein

n is an integer between 2 and 8,

R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, are each selected from among substituted or unsubstituted alkylene groups having 1 to 18 carbon atoms and of substituted or unsubstituted arylene groups having 6 to 12 carbon atoms,

Z<sup>1</sup> and Z<sup>2</sup>, which may be the same or different, each represents a group



$R^5$

wherein  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$ , which may be the same or different, are each selected from among alkyl groups having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, phenyl groups, alkoxy groups having 1 to 8 carbon atoms, and cycloalkoxy groups having 5 to 8 carbon atoms, with the proviso that at least one of  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  is an alkoxy or cycloalkoxy; and

CS d) at least one guanidine substituted by at least two groups, which may be the same or different, and each selected from among alkyl, aryl or aralkyl groups;

wherein the composition satisfies both of the following features (i) and (ii):

(i) the composition comprises at least one diene polymer which has at least one amino terminal group of an aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine which is bonded thereto at the end of the chain, the polymer then being devoid of alkoxysilane and silanol group; and

(ii) the composition comprises at least one free aliphatic or cycloaliphatic amine.